

HON

VI

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP.

A SERMON,

PREACHED ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1832.

AT THE VISITATION OF THE

HONORABLE AND RIGHT REV. CHARLES JAMES,

LORD BISHOP OF QUEBEC.

BY THE

VENERABLE JOHN STRACHAN, D.D., L.L.D.,

ARCHDEACON OF YORK.

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SERMON.



Acts, 2nd Chap.—Verses 41–42. *Then they that gladly received his word were baptised; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand Souls.—And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

THE office of the Apostles was twofold.—They were witnesses appointed by CHRIST to bear testimony to the facts of his Ministry, and this they were qualified to do by their constant attendance upon him while he remained on earth, whether they understood the full import of these facts or not. They were also Ministers of the word, ordained of the Holy Ghost, and Expounders and Preachers of the Gospel.

Previous to his departure, JESUS conferred upon them the power of working signs and wonders, that their testimony might have a prevailing influence upon the minds of others; but he commanded them to wait for the coming of the Comforter, before they acted upon the commission which he had given them, to go and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

In expectation of this great event, the disciples as they had been directed, remained at Jerusalem from the Lord's ascension to the day of Pentecost; which being fully come, "they were all with one accord in

one place, when suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting ; and there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

The Apostles felt from the power conferred upon them by this wonderful manifestation, that the moment had arrived for commencing the work of conversion ; and going immediately forth, they preached to the Jews then assembled at Jerusalem, from all quarters of the world, the words of eternal life. The multitude were amazed at hearing these poor illiterate Galileans speaking with the greatest fluency and propriety, the languages of their respective Countries ; announcing the commencement of the Messiah's kingdom, and the glorious privileges obtained for believers by the birth, death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Though it be evident from the context that the other Apostles addressed different portions of the people, yet, the Holy Evangelist confines himself in his narrative, to the sermon of St. Peter, as being doubtless the same in substance with the rest ; and which, through the mighty energy of the Spirit, converted three thousand Souls :—all these gladly received the word and were baptised, and continued steadfastly in the doctrine of the Apostles, in fellowship and breaking of the bread, and in the prayers. Such was the

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origin of the Christian Church, which, since the day of Pentecost has been continually increasing, for the Lord adds daily to its number such as shall be saved.

After informing us that the Church of Christ began in one congregation, which enlarged itself like a fruitful vine, and gradually branched into many congregations, for the convenience of worship and discipline ; the text points out the conditions of Church Membership required by the Apostles, and which are as necessary now as they were in the Church of Jerusalem.

These conditions are so clear and simple, and so well adapted for promoting unity and peace, that it is difficult to conceive how they could have been mistaken or perverted. But it is no less strange than true, that many professing christians are more ready to appeal to the book of Revelation to justify preconceived principles and opinions, than for correct information concerning such as it is their duty to adopt. They first assume certain tenets, and then they search and sometimes wrest the Scriptures, in order to support them. Instead of beginning with the law and the testimony—instead of taking up the Bible with the docile simplicity of children, and asking, how readest thou ? What says the word of God ? They are much more disposed to say, What thinkest thou ? They will not surrender their understanding to Christ as a Divine Teacher, and will only receive and acknowledge his doctrine as far as it can be reconciled

to the system which they have already chosen—But were they in the true spirit of candour, to permit the Scriptures to sit in judgment upon themselves, their motives and principles, the verdict would annihilate almost all the Divisions that afflict the Christian Church.

The conditions of Church Membership required by the Apostles were,

First—UNITY IN DOCTRINE,

Second—IN FELLOWSHIP,

Third—IN THE PARTICIPATION OF THE SACRAMENTS,

Fourth—IN PRAYER.

First—To continue steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine, was the first thing required in the primitive Church. The more essential articles of our religion called in Scripture, “The form of sound words,” the words of “Faith,” the principles of the doctrine of Christ, or in our common way of speaking, the Creed have, from the commencement of Christianity, been collected in one body—Such summaries were committed by the Apostles to the first Preachers, for their guidance in teaching the converts and their children, as we find from St. Paul’s directions to Timothy.—They began with the Creed of our Saviour’s own making, namely, the recognition and belief in the Holy Trinity, which was also the principal part of the commission given to the twelve Apostles, and was ordained to be the express form of admission into his Church by Christ himself. Here then we have the first article of the Apostles’ doctrine—a firm belief in the Holy Trinity, in which belief the members

of the primitive Church or congregation continued steadfast.—Had God the Father, never created us—or God the Son, redeemed us—or God the Holy Ghost sanctified us, yet they had been equally glorious—but not being manifested in this particular manner they could not have been worshipped by these titles—But now each Person of the Godhead has a distinct charge in the œconomy of our redemption, and, therefore, each is to be worshipped with separate and appropriate devotion.

When the Son by his incarnation, his preaching and suffering, had finished the work given him to do; when the Holy Ghost had manifested his Person by numerous miracles, and his glorious descent upon the Apostles, then, and not till then, did they baptise in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The sermon of St. Peter, which is the first ever preached under the Gospel dispensation, includes every article necessary to salvation. That Jesus, whom the Jews had crucified, was the Son of God the promised Messiah; that he had arisen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that sleep; had ascended up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, administering the kingdom of Providence and Grace, and where he shall continue to reign in power and glory, till his triumph over sin, death, and the world is complete—his enemies his footstool, and his friends crowned with eternal felicity.

The preaching of these doctrines by the Apostle,

made such a powerful impression on the minds of the multitude, that they were pricked to the heart, and cried out, men and brethren, what shall we do? St. Peter replied, repent, and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. In fine, the doctrine gathered from this eloquent and searching address, and its effects on the people, comprehends every thing material which we find in the creeds of the Church, and teaches us that it is necessary for us, to avow our belief in the Lord Jesus Christ—that we can have no access to the Father but by the Son—nor access to the Son in any other way than by embracing his doctrine, and trusting to the efficacy of the atonement which he hath made, for the sins of the whole world. The word steadfastly attached to doctrine, is in this place of peculiar import—there was no wavering among the converts, no doubts, no misgivings—they were firm and determined, believing, and speaking the same thing, and perfectly joined in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

Second—IN FELLOWSHIP.

The text exhibits a beautiful picture of the primitive Church. The disciples were distinguished by their ardent faith and love for Christ their Saviour, and this made obedience to his commands, rather a pleasure than a duty—united in principle, and in the bonds of charity and usefulness; such purity, and warmth, and singleness of heart, were communica-

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ted to their devotion, as to make it the pouring out of one soul. We need not, therefore, wonder that their enemies acknowledged their virtues, and that they themselves enjoyed in the practice of holiness, and in their mutual affection one towards another, a felicity during life, and a consolation in death, totally unknown to other men.

This state of purity and love, presents a very different aspect from what the visible Church of Christ now offers to our view. Torn into a thousand fragments, and these filled with pride and animosity, one against another. The rending of our Lord's seamless garment, and tearing in pieces his mystical body, is the greatest calamity that has befallen the Christian Religion, and is completely at variance with its object, which ought only to be one though branched into many Societies, and to exhibit love and unity as its principal and unchangeable features. Not that this unity can exist without the conditions mentioned in this and other places of Holy Scripture. There must be adherence to the truth and to holiness of life, for without these there can be no peace,—the wisdom, says the Spirit, which is from above, is first pure and then peaceable. Therefore, peace, however desirable, is only to be sought in subordination to purity, and all attempts to reconcile differences among 'Christians, which involve the smallest sacrifice of truth, or seek in any manner to explain away or compromise it, are altogether inconsistent with the Christian character.—

Having chosen Christ for their portion, and enlisted under his banners, the primitive converts constantly and diligently engaged in his service, and counting all things but loss when compared to the excellency of God, their Saviour ; they felt that the world would judge of their religion by the fruits which it manifested in their conduct and dispositions. It was, therefore, their delight to act as became their lofty destination—as the salt of the earth, as the light of the world,—walking in all purity and holiness of conversation as those whose Fellowship is truly with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost.

Were the Spirit of the Gospel to prevail now as it did then, the followers of Christ, penetrated with the blessings they enjoy, through his mediation, would live together in the same peace, harmony and love. Every one in his own station, would exert himself to communicate holiness and happiness to his neighbour—and this by secret prayer, by attending the public worship and ordinances of the Church, by avoiding the appearance of evil, by a conscientious discharge of the duties of social life, and maintaining a right state of mind towards God. In this way, the sweet fellowship in unity and love which adorned the primitive Church would again appear among Christians--the same truth, the same holiness, the same joy in Christ Jesus ; and all these communicating the blissful sensation that they are dwelling in love with God, and with one another. It is on such as these that our Heavenly Father bestows his nature and his happi-

ness ; he prepares them to delight in the same actions and pursuits, to become a people after his own heart the brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as he makes them recipients of purity and felicity, he continues to bless them, more and more.

Third—IN THE PARTICIPATION OF THE SACRAMENTS.

Only two symbolical institutions, Baptism, and the Lords' Supper, were appointed by our Saviour himself, and both are referred to in the sacred Scriptures, as generally necessary to salvation. They represent in a form, equally intelligible to all men, the most important truths of the Gospel. The subjects of our Lords preaching were Repentance and Faith—the promised result of repentance was the cleansing from sin, as signified by washing with water in baptism—the result of faith was forgiveness through the atonement of our Saviours' death, and his miraculous assistance as set forth in the Elements used in the Eucharist. Here the symbol is two-fold—the bread is broken and wine poured out to denote Christs dying for us. The bread is eaten and the wine drunk to denote the spiritual strength, refreshment and life, which we derive from his mysterious presence and union with us. The Sacraments were ordained by our Saviour himself, and neither left to the Holy Ghost nor to the Church, under his guidance.

Baptism is the symbol of a covenant betwixt two parties—between the Christian and his Lord—on the part of our Saviour it was instituted as the means by which grace was given, and as a proof, it was in the

primitive Church, perhaps always accompanied by some extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; on the part of the Redeemed, it was a pledge that he believed.—Thus when the Eunuch requested to be baptised by Philip, his answer is “If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest.” The same qualification for admission into the covenant of salvation is required by all the Apostles—they were the special witnesses of what was to be believed, to them was committed the Sacrament of admission into the Church, namely, “the keys of the kingdom,” and it was their duty to announce to those desiring to enter the flock of Christ the condition necessary for admission, and to become standing witnesses, that it had been complied with.

The Lords’ Supper is termed a memorial—it was enjoined on the Apostles and all Christians to commemorate our Saviours fulfilment of the most important part of his Ministry. Being a monument of the most mysterious of those facts to which they were appointed witnesses—and they were the best qualified to understand and explain its origin, as they were also to bear testimony to the awful scene which it calls to remembrance.

These beautiful and affecting ordinances declare, that we are called to mercy and redemption, and when the bread of life touches our lips, it conveys to our consciences a stronger assurance than the voice of Angels, that our iniquity is taken away, and our sins blotted out. The two Sacraments refer in a most affectionate and lively manner to the two most interesting

events of the believers' pilgrimage on earth—by Baptism he is admitted into the Church of Christ, and is promised the most excellent benefits which God confers upon man, namely, the purification of his soul by the influence of His Holy Spirit. By the Sacrament of the Lords' Supper, which is equally tender and lovely, the mind is filled with the most grateful affection, and all those holy impressions which our Lord intended by its appointment.

These Sacraments are of unspeakable advantage, in uniting the members of the Church, and attaching them affectionately to one another. They are a visible chain connecting Christians together, the first and last links of which connect them with God. They open a common resort of benefits in which men affectingly perceive their mutual relations—and that their hopes, and interests, and pursuits are the same. One Christian discovers in another the same holy badge which he himself wears, the same objects, and the same cares; and these form a bond of fellowship and union at once pleasant and impressive. In what way can the feelings of brotherly kindness and charity be more strongly excited, than when Christians are gathered round the same table—to recognise the same head—to feed upon memorials of the same deliverance from a common destruction, and to receive at the same hands the pledges of a joint inheritance of everlasting life? But it is not my present purpose to dwell upon the benefits of the Sacraments, but only to shew that a participation in both was one of the

conditions of Church Membership in the first congregation of Christians, and ought to be so still.

Fourth—AND IN PRAYER—or as it ought to be translated, IN THE PRAYERS.

They continued in the Prayers, that is in public and common prayer, delivered by the Apostles in the Congregation of the Faithful. Although we do not meet with express precepts in the law of Moses about praying by forms, yet we read of devout people praying in the temple. We likewise know that public forms of prayer, as well as reading select portions of the Scriptures, constituted the worship of the Jewish Synagogue, and that our Saviour so far from expressing any dislike of these ministrations, freely and contentedly joined in them. Had they been contrary to the will of God, our Lord, who never hesitated to reprehend his countrymen for corrupting the Law in any of its essential points, and severely reproached them for preferring the traditions of men to the commandments of God, would have reproved them on account of their forms of public worship, and never sanctioned them by his presence and participation.—But so far was he from finding fault, that we behold him reading and expounding the portion of Scripture appointed for the Sabbath day, and regularly frequenting the worship of the Temple and Synagogue.

We find that John the Baptist taught his disciples how to pray—and when our Saviour in a certain place ceased praying, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord teach us to pray, as John also taught his disci-

ples, and accordingly he instructed them to pray by that form which goes by the name of the Lords Prayer—Now this fact affords us indisputable authority not only for praying in a set form, but for using the same words on different occasions both public and private, since the prayer given at the request of the disciple, is the same with that which was delivered by our Saviour in his Sermon on the Mount. This prayer was, therefore, twice given by our Saviour, on the Mount, and about a year after at the request of one of the twelve. Now it is scarcely possible to believe that the Apostles would ever omit this prayer in the public worship of the Church, nor is it credible that in the numerous congregations which were immediately constituted, far too many for the twelve to serve in person, that they would leave the mode of worship to the direction of uninspired men. They had before them the practice of the ancient Church, the example of St. John the Baptist, and that of our Saviour himself; the latter of which is to be considered equal or rather the same as an express command. And thus it seems to have been understood by the Primitive Christians, for we find that the Church from the very first adopted forms of prayer, some of which must have been authorized by the Apostles themselves. In no other way can we account for the harmony which pervades all the most ancient liturgies, and the union in form and worship maintained in all the Churches, however distant and by whichever of the Apostles planted.

We are apt to blame the Church of Rome, and with justice, for praying in a tongue unknown to the people, but there appears to me very little difference between such prayers and those which are unknown till they are pronounced, and which the hearers may find totally inapplicable to their case and situation. Moreover, the petitions or expressions follow each other so rapidly, that the mind becomes distracted, and each being new to the hearer, he has no time to think or reflect upon their import before another is announced. With the prayers before us, we can give life to every expression, and apply to ourselves with intense earnestness, those parts which more particularly suit our state and feelings, without any perplexity or interruption to our devotion.

As it is then matter of history that forms of prayer were employed in the Jewish worship, and that liturgies were universal in the Christian Church at a very early period, we have reason to conclude that the practice was general—that it originated in Apostolic direction and example, and consequently, that the prayers spoken of in the text were prescribed devotions appointed by the inspired and legitimate governors of the Church, and offered with one accord in all the assemblies; and all this assumes the force of demonstration, when it is farther observed, that the article *the* ought to be placed in the text before the word Prayers, as in the Original Greek; that is, the converts continued in *the* prayers of the Church.

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Such, my Brethren, is a very brief notice of the conditions of Church Membership required by the Apostles, and cheerfully complied with by the first converts to Christianity, and it is especially gratifying to find, that our Church recognizes and expects a strict compliance with them all from her children. Formed after the model of that established by the Apostles, she maintains the same doctrine and similar forms of devotion, and dismissing from her public worship whatever is superfluous, she retains every thing essential. Rightly administering the sacraments, and joining in known and approved prayer, as was the practice of the primitive Church, she insures the spiritual edification of all her members.

In her ministerial offices also she follows the Apostolic rule. The sacred record requires dispensation, and, therefore, provision was made from the very first for an order of men, distinct from the laity, to become the dispensers. We find the twelve, and those whom they appointed, employed exclusively in the performance of ministerial duties; and if the preaching of the word and administration of the sacraments are to continue forever, the obligation among Christians to have an officiating order to succeed the first, duly to dispense them must also continue forever; and it may be safely pronounced, that there is no corruption in the Christian Church which has been, and still is, attended with so many deplorable consequences as that, of persons assuming the ministry of the word

and sacraments, without being sufficiently qualified and lawfully called.

The three orders of Clergy, consisting of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, were, from Apostolic times, recognized as the orders of Ministers, whose special office and duty it was to be dispensers of the truths contained in the New Testament. Those who succeeded to the Apostles, imbued with that lowliness which distinguishes the true disciple of Christ, were unwilling to assume the same name, and adopted the humbler title of Bishop or Overseer. The like modest course was pursued by the other two orders, and no distinction was observed beyond that of Bishop, Presbyter and Deacon, and as their functions were well defined, they lived in harmony and concord; so much so, that during the first, or primitive age of the Gospel, the words Bishop and Presbyter were frequently used promiscuously, as we sometimes call Kings, Princes and Judges, Magistrates, but the authority of Bishops, in certain spiritual functions, was ever distinct and supreme.

We should very much mistake the government and discipline of the primitive Church, were we to consider the power of the Bishops either arbitrary or unlimited. The Church is not a heritage to command, but a family to govern, and it was the glory of the successors of the Apostles to do nothing of weight or moment without asking the advice and consent of their Clergy. This was found not only decent and becoming, but absolutely necessary, to give due force

and authority to the acts of the Church, and while this mode of proceeding prevailed, nothing could exceed the brotherly kindness which existed among the Ministers of the Altar. All things were transacted by the Clergy, with the Bishop at their head in common council, and after full deliberation—whether it were ordination to the Ministry—the exercise of discipline—the reconciliation of penitents, or the regulation of the revenues and temporal affairs of the Church. The Presbyters sat in the Provincial Assemblies or Synods, and attended to the interests of religion within their bounds. This prudent distribution of power was exercised most successfully for many ages, and may be considered a mark of the true Church, and essential to her prosperity. And indeed some of our most able Divines attribute the decline of the Mother Church in the affections of the people of England to a departure from this salutary mode of government. Pure as her Parochial Ministrations are, and conducted, generally speaking, with a singleness of heart and faithfulness of purpose, that has never been exceeded in any Christian Society, yet from not having public assemblies to interest the population and enlist their affections in her favour, her salutary influence is daily diminishing. She is the only Ecclesiastical Establishment to be found in the history of our Religion, which has no Synod, no efficient Convocation, no means within herself of making such alterations in her forms of worship and ceremonies, as times and circumstances may render

expedient. Hence the relaxation of her discipline—want of unity among her Clergy in promoting her objects as the true Church of Christ, and their readiness to join, for the sake of a corrupt and hollow popularity, other denominations for religious purposes which are continually plotting her destruction. In the early ages of Christianity, the Church possessed a salutary influence over her members, which effectually prevented such strange anomalies and dereliction of principle. She devised the best means for promoting the general interests of religion, and exercised at the same time a wholesome but mild discipline over her erring and offending adherents. There may be many difficulties in the way of restoring this salutary authority to the Parent Church, though it is much to be desired, and has often occupied the consideration of her most intelligent Members, and is even now exciting general attention. But here it is comparatively easy; and we, like the ancient Episcopal Church in Scotland, and that of the neighbouring States, in which the Clergy retain their proper share of power and honor, and have their regular councils to deliberate for the welfare of their respective communions, may with the greatest advantage return to primitive usage. These Churches, with their Bishops to preside over the meetings of their Clergy, to discuss, and finally to sanction, such measures for the general interests of religion, as changes in climate, manners and government may require, and to become the dispensers of those graver awards of discipline necessary for the

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welfare of their communions, are rapidly increasing in strength and numbers. Their conventions spare their Bishops many painful duties, the discharge of which is not unfrequently accompanied with much odium. Reports from the different Clergy will often suggest measures for the good of the Church, which sober deliberation matures and puts into operation. Even the requiring such periodical statements of the situation of each Congregation, its progress or decline, and comparing them in the assembly one with another, serves as a salutary check to indolence and imprudence, and the dread of exposure will frequently rouse those to diligence, whom the love of Christ and the Christian principle of duty had failed to move. Moreover the Clergy being thus brought into constant communication, act in concert with the zeal and intelligence of an efficient and united body—defects of plans for the improvement of the people, adopted by individuals on their own judgment are amended, and the objection of a want of system in the proceedings of the Church effectually removed.

The period is rapidly approaching when something of the kind will be found necessary in this Province, if we really desire the prosperity of our Apostolic Church, and to carry her affectionate and beautiful Ministrations into every cottage of our people. Already has the law made a distinction between the Clergy ordained in the Colonies and those in England, and now we are about to be removed from the fostering care of the Society for Propagating the Gos-

pel in Foreign parts, which has for ages watched with the most unwearied attention and Christian affection over the Spiritual interests of British America. It will, therefore, be necessary for us in future to depend more upon our own resources and exertions than has been hitherto required. And with a Bishop of the primitive age, whose active exertions and anxiety for the extension of Christ's Kingdom, neither slumber nor sleep. A Bishop, familiar with almost every foot of this extensive Diocese, and which he has traversed in its length and breadth many a time. A Bishop, who identifies himself with the Country in which he has spent the greater portion of his life, and is surrounded by an affectionate Clergy, eager to second and even to anticipate his wishes, what may not be effected under the divine blessing; all acting with one mind and one soul, with the Scriptures and our affecting liturgy in our hands, and the holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts. Much, my Brethren, may be done to build up the Church in the affections of the people. Even now something more than usual may be accomplished. By itinerating where we are unable to open permanent Missions—by occasional visits where more is not allowed, the scattered sheep may be collected, and the sacred flame kept burning in almost every Township, for the man of Macedonia is every where crying out, come over and help me.

All who are truly interested in the glory of God, will rejoice in the dissemination of the Gospel through the Province, and although other denominations may

naturally desire to be the instruments employed in this good work, yet I verily believe, that next to themselves, they wish it may be done through the pure channel of our Establishment, and this more especially for the guidance and consolation of thousands of our Friends who are daily emigrating from England and Ireland, and settling in the wilderness—that they may retain their love of religion unimpaired, and possess the sweet blessing of its ministrations, as in their Father land. And to the accomplishment of this, we are greatly encouraged by the well known fact, that there has always prevailed, with very trifling exceptions, the greatest harmony among the various denominations of Christians in Upper Canada.

Widely as we differ from the Roman Catholics, in many religious points of the greatest importance, we have always lived with them in the kindest intercourse and in the cordial exchange of the charities of social life. The worthy Prelate, by whom they are at present spiritually governed, has been my Friend for nearly thirty years.

With the members of the Church of Scotland we associate in the same manner. Only one Minister of that communion resided in the Province for many years after my arrival from Great Britain, with whom I lived in the most friendly terms, and after his lamented death, it was my privilege and satisfaction to speak of his benevolence, his piety and retiring

excellence of character.* Unfortunately as the number increased, a subject of controversy arose, which has had the effect of producing something of a temporary estrangement, but it is now passing away. And why, should it not? The merits of our Sister Church cannot be unknown to you my Brethren. To me they are familiar, and connected with many of my cherished and early associations. In the exemplary discharge of their duties, and in the modest simplicity of their lives, the Presbyterian Ministers of this Province are entitled to much commendation. Though differing in some matters of considerable moment, and more especially in the principles and forms of Ecclesiastical Polity, I am always ready to affirm, that they deserve the confidence of the community and the warm affection of their own people.

Of that popular and increasing class of Christians who call themselves a branch of our Church, both at

NOTE.—* This alludes to the controversy about the Clergy Reserves, and though I am still of opinion, that as the law now stands, they belong exclusively to the Church of England, and will never, even if they remain undiminished, yield more than a very moderate support to her Clergy required in the Province, yet I freely declare in my own name, and that of many of my Brethren, that it will be grateful to us to see our Presbyterian as well as our Roman Catholic Friends, placed on a respectable footing as to the means of obtaining that religious instruction which they, as well as we, are unable to procure permanently for themselves; and so far are we from feeling envious and jealous at any assistance bestowed by his Majesty's Government on those acknowledged branches of the Christian Family, that we shall rejoice to see it greatly increased.

home and abroad, I would also speak with praise, notwithstanding their departure from the Apostolic ordinance, and the hostility long manifested against us by some of their leading members. 'This hostility was the more to be deplored, as their Founder was a regularly ordained Minister of the Church of England, who never departed from her communion or allowed his followers to separate. Simple, and disinterested in his views of great learning, intelligence and sagacity, he was also adorned with some of the brightest graces of the Christian character. Henceforth it is expected that the piety and zeal of his followers in this Colony will be directed by his spirit, and that having assumed his mantle and unfurled his banner, they will cherish the same friendly disposition towards our Establishment which their brethren do in England.

Now this social harmony among the different denominations of Christians sufficiently proves, that there is no particular impediment to the extension of our Church in this magnificent Province, if we are only active in the performance of our duty. The population is multiplying every summer by tens of thousands, and spreading itself through the whole country. Both Parents and Children are in very many places shut out from public worship and the sacraments of the Church. Left entirely to secular callings, their minds are by degrees engrossed by temporal, and withdrawn from spiritual things. Great then is the obligation that rests upon us to fan the holy flame that has once

been lighted up—and to maintain the saving truth in every heart that has once acknowledged its sanctions. Nor are we to stop here, but to diffuse the glad tidings of the Gospel over every part of this fine country, and to do so through what we conscientiously believe to be the most effectual channel, our Ecclesiastical Establishment. This is not only our duty and privilege, but is imposed upon us by the most sacred of all Christian obligations. And how, my Brethren, is it to be done? Surely by every one of us diligently doing the work of an Evangelist. By enforcing the conditions of Church fellowship, as required by the Apostles—by making full proof of our Ministry, and carrying Christianity into the hearts of those who are still ignorant of its blessings.

But remember, that in accomplishing these mighty objects, persuasion must be our only weapon. Preach the word was the direction issued from on high. Preach the Gospel to every Creature. Proclaim it as Heralds through the world. Sound it in the ears of all men, for its credentials will in time give it universal reception. It was preached by our Lord and his disciples in pure and perfect love. Joy and gladness were its constant attendants, and so they must ever be, for the propagation of the Gospel is nothing more than the expansion of celestial joy, purity and love.

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